REPORT OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE (West Bengal) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Fifty-Ninth Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Eighth Lok Sabha) on action taken on the 175th Report of the Committee (Seventh Lok Sabha) relating to Drought Prone Area Programme.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Sukomal Sen and Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta wanted to mention something about the inconvenience caused to Members by the stoppage of buses. Mr. Sukomal Sen.

Re STOPPAGE OF BUS SERVICE IN DELHI BY D.T.C.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN (West Bengal): Sir, today a "bandh" has been called by a political party to protest against the massacre in Punjab. I am not going into the merits of the "bandh". But I am surprised to see that the Delhi Transport Corporation has officially announced that it will suspend the bus service today. It has come out in the newspapers and over the radio also they announced the intention of the DTC to suspend the bus service today.

A political party can organise a strike, buses can be stopped by picketers and agitators or even by the employees themselves. They can also go on strike. It is for the people to choose whether they will travel in buses or not. It is for the people to choose whether they will stop the buses or not. What has the Government to do in it? I would like to know whether the Delhi Administration and the Government are also joining the "bandh"? Otherwise how can the Delhi Administration or the DTC announce in such a manner, newspapers and over the radio, that they will suspend bus operations? It is outright opportunism on the part of the Delhi Administration, the Government of India and the DTC. I would like to have a statement from the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have already asked the Minister to come. Now, Mr. Das Gupta. (*Interruptions*). There will be no general discussion. Members who did not ask for permission earlier will not get a chance.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, the matter is more serious than has been made out by my hon. friend. There is report in the newspapers that the Delhi Administration has advised the DTC to stop the playing of buses. It means that the Government does not want the buses to move and, as a result, the Government does not want the people to go for their normal work. It means that the Government is a party to the strike that has been sponsored by a political party. We, of course, protest against the massacre that has taken place. But the question is whether it is a State-sponsored "bandh" which is taking place in Delhi today because the West Bengal Government has been accused on a number of occasions that it is sponsoring "bandhs". Now, it seems that Delhi Government is sponsoring the "bandh". And what is more important is that while fighting against terrorism, we must be on guard against * . . . Any action on the part of the Government which encourages the forces of * is inimical to the..."

MR. CHAIRMAN : All references to * will be deleted because the hon. Member sought permission from me only to mention the inconvenience caused to the Members.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA (Bihar): That will cause greater inconvenience in future. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. A. G. Kulkarni.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra) : I am raising my voice against the inconvenience caused to the Members of Parliament. I am concerned only with the Members of Parliament. I waited up to 10.10. The Matador comes at 9.50 or 9.55. I would request you to direct the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs or the Minister for Surface Transport, whoever he is, to see that some arrangements are made to bring the Members of Parliament. I was very much inconvenienced. Fortunately, I got a rickshaw. I came in a rickshaw and had to walk from that door to the door of the Rajya Sabha. I am not concerned with the bandh or with the

*Deleted as ordered by the Chair.

[Shri A. G. Kulkarni]

political party or non-political party. It is their job. The Government has to maintain law and order. I am not concerned with it. A protest has to be lodged. The Government has failed on the point that the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and the Minister for Surface Transport were not alert in providing Matador or other vehicles to the Members of Parliament. I will request you to direct them to be careful infuture.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): Sir, I fully share the feelings expressed by the hon. Members here. We received a message from the Delhi Administration that because of the law and order situation and on their advice, the D.T.C. should not operate tomorrow. (*Interruptions*). Let me complete. Let me complete please. We have checked up and there have cases or there have been occasions in the past when on the advice of the Delhi Administration, the Department had to act like this. But we, on the D.T.C. side, are not in a position to ask the reason. It is the Delhi Administration which has to do it taking into consideration the law and order situation.

As far as the inconvenience caused to the Members of Parliament is concerned, I do agree that there was a communication gap which took place. In the morning itself, at 11.00 o'clock, when I realised it, we did arrange a Matador which has come here. But the fact is that we should have been more alert to provide transport to the Members of Parliament particularly when the Parliament is in session. We are also concerned about the inconvenience to the public at large. The common citizen has also got affected. But we had to agree to the advice of the Delhi Administration because of various reasons. In future, we will try to sort out different alternatives so that the public is not so much inconvenienced.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA : *

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record. Now, Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh will move the Government Motion.

*Not recorded as directed by the Chair.

GOVERNMENT MOTION RE. GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the general economic situation in the country be taken into consideration."

Sir, I welcome this occasion to have a discussion in the House on the general economic situation in the country. I would like to take this opportunity to share with the House my perception of our economic achievements as well as the problems we face and the solutions that we must jointly endeavour to find.

The present economic situation is characterised by several favourable factors. As the House is aware, the momentum of economic growth is being maintained. It is a matter of particular satisfaction that in the first two years of the Seventh Plan we have been able to finance over 40 per cent of the Central Plan target in real terms at 1984-85 prices. This is unprecedented. We have substantially stepped up programmes for the poor and taken new initiatives for the benefit of the workers. The infrastructure sectors of the economy are performing very well. The price situation is under control. New issues in the capital market have reached record levels. Tax revenues, particularly personal income-tax revenues, continue to display a remarkable buoyancy and our foreign exchange reserves are at a comfortable level. At the same time, it is important to anticipate the problems ahead so that we can find proper solutions well in time without jeopardizing our economic development. There are two major areas of economic concern, namely, the balance of payments and the rapid growth of Government expenditure, mainly on account of the implementation of the Pay Commission's recommendations, increase in subsidies and outlays on account of the natural calamities, etc. In these areas of concern, we must act decisively, and I would like to take a few minutes to elaborate these points.

SHRI A.G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra) : Sir, is he making a statement ?